

# Vertical Times

ACCESS • CONSERVATION • ACTIVISM

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Mark Weber

## FOREST SERVICE NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING TO START Access Fund policy expert appointed to committee

The US Forest Service announced on Oct. 29 the start of the Negotiated Rulemaking process that will clarify Wilderness climbing policy and write any regulations governing the use of fixed anchors. The Access Fund's position on fixed anchors is that the opportunity to place, use, and replace fixed anchors is essential for climbers. Most Wilderness climbs require few, if any, fixed anchors, and this standard should be preserved. But it shouldn't be a criminal act to leave rapel anchors on a Wilderness climb due to emergency, bad weather, or other factors.

"We have lobbied for a clear national policy on the issue of fixed anchors in Wilderness areas, and we support the Forest Service's proposed rulemaking as a step in this direction," said Access Fund's Senior Policy Analyst Sam Davidson.

Davidson is arguably the nation's foremost expert on climbing policy and will be the Access Fund's representative at the Forest Service's first-ever Negotiated Rulemaking. Davidson, a former NOLS instructor, has been working on Wilderness climbing issues for more than 10 years.

"However," Davidson continued, "We are concerned about the committee's makeup. There are other independent organizations with a unique stake in this issue that should also participate, including the American Safe Climbing Association. We also feel that the committee would benefit from a presentation by the Sawtooth Climbers Coalition, due to their work in the Sawtooth Wilderness, where a local decision in 1997 precipitated the Forest Service's recent attempt to ban "all use" of fixed anchors in Wilderness in June of 1998."

In early November the Access Fund mailed a Climbers Alert to all members to ask that they write suggesting the above groups be included on the committee. These letters must be postmarked by Nov. 29 to be accepted into the record. See the Access Fund Web site at [www.accessfund.org](http://www.accessfund.org) for more information on how to write the Forest Service about this issue.

### The implications

At stake in the Negotiated Rulemaking is the opportunity to climb hundreds of North America's most classic routes, from California's Mount Whitney to Pingora in the Winds, from Granite Mountain in Arizona to Idaho's Sawtooths, from Tahquitz Rock in California to Linville Gorge in North Carolina.

Hundreds more equally important climbing resources—including El Capitan, Baboquivari Peak, the Tetons, Zion, and Joshua Tree, which are not in national forests—could also be affected by the Forest Service rulemaking. These climbing resources lie in Wilderness areas managed by the Park Service and BLM, which are expected to follow the Forest Service's lead in managing climbing in Wilderness.

*Idaho's Sawtooth Wilderness, where it all began. Climbers' ability to place safety anchors in Wilderness will be negotiated by a committee next spring. Senior Policy Advisor Sam Davidson will represent Access Fund members on the committee.*

# Spray

OPINIONS FROM THE

## REMOVABLE BOLTS: NOT THE ANSWER

by Marion Hutchison, regional coordinator

The concept of drilling holes to place bolts versus the concept of drilling holes for removable gear will quickly, if not immediately, become one and the same in the minds of managers, conservationists, the public, and most climbers. This is not a revolutionary concept. Climbers could have been drilling/chiseling permanent slots on blank faces for accepting conventional small wired nuts any time since their invention. However, the climbing community has never accepted that practice. If they had we wouldn't be currently in the middle of a bolt controversy with federal land managers—we would be in the middle of a "pock" controversy.

These "new" devices are not new technology. They are simply a modified design of existing removable gear, like sliders. The practice of drilling, chiseling or otherwise altering the rock for placing removable gear has never been accepted on the national scene. Remember, the biggest problem non-climbers have with fixed anchors is not the fact that people see them, it's the fact that they know they exist. It will be no different with drilled holes. Whether or not they are seen or are visually less noticeable than the already invisible bolt hanger

climbers are out there drilling holes

**Drilling** will be just as concerning.

**holes and altering rock**

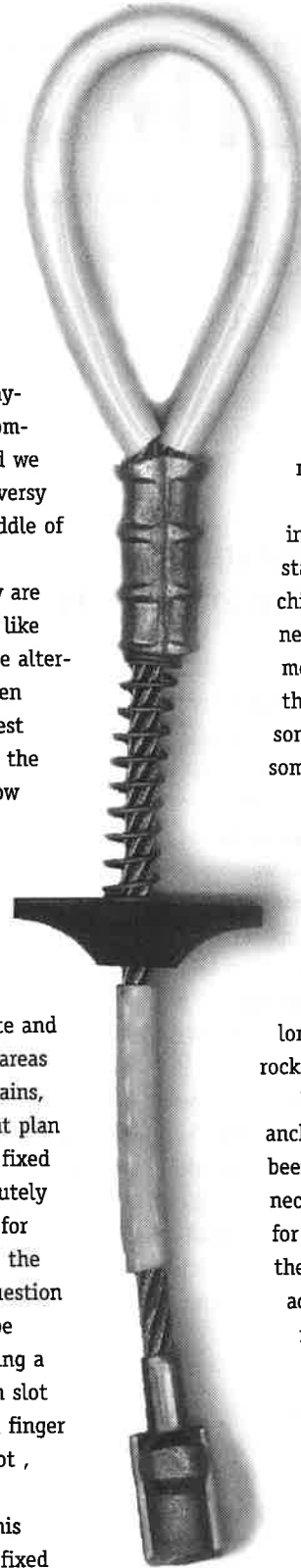
**for placing removable gear**

**seems like some much awaited**

**savior. It's not.**

is whether or not the practice should be allowed at all. If I can drill a half-inch hole for placing a removable cam, why can't I drill or chisel a half-inch slot for placing a wired stopper? How about a half-inch finger pocket so that I can link all the moves on my 50-foot, 5.14c face climb?

The bigger question here is not whether or not this practice would help reduce impacts caused by using fixed



anchors, but rather, would this practice lead the next generation of climbers to readily accept alteration of our rock resources for any purpose?

I think the climbing community needs to think long and hard about the implications of this. At one time not too long ago, clean climbing meant something, and chiseling holds or drilling hundreds of bolts in a 40-foot wall was unheard of. Then came sport climbing, and years later we are dealing with the fallout of too much drilling and too many bolts. Now suddenly, drilling holes and altering rock for placing removable gear seems like some much awaited savior. It's not.

We have already witnessed at some sport climbing areas (mostly on private lands, but also on some state and federal property) the practice of drilling, chiseling and sculpting holds. Along with an extensive network of grid bolting, these areas amount to nothing more than manufactured outdoor climbing gyms. While this interpretation of climbing may be acceptable to some at certain local, private climbing areas, it is not something the national climbing community or land managers want or need descending on our state and federal lands. This "new" virtuous idea of drilling placements for removable gear may initially seem as though it has no negative repercussions when compared to placing fixed anchors. However, the bigger, unseen threat is the underlying erosion of one of climbing's most long-standing and accepted values: no alteration of our rock resources.

While it can be argued that drilling holes for fixed anchors alters the rock resource, bolts have historically been used as a last resort for the purposes of providing necessary security for the first ascent party, as well as for all who follow. Since every climber carries carabiners, there is no discrimination as to who in the future can access that route. However, a route with drilled holes for removable gear cannot be safely climbed by anyone who does not own those specialty devices. Given the option between holes for fixed anchors versus holes for removable gear, the choice is obvious.

*The opinions voiced in Spray are not necessarily those of the Access Fund.*

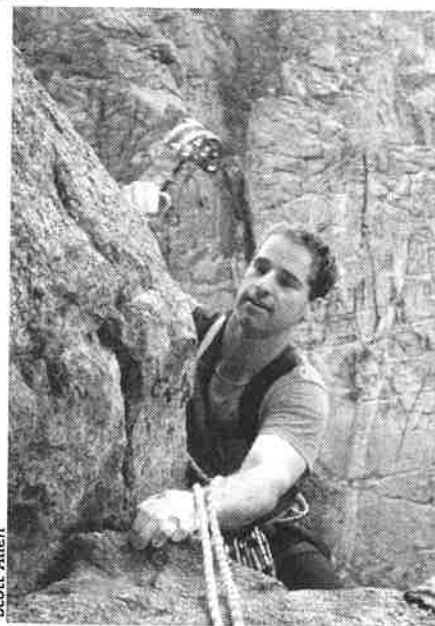
# Area Reports

## BLACK CANYON, COLO.

Southwest Colorado's Black Canyon became the newest national park in the US on Oct. 23. The Black Canyon National Park, formerly managed as a national monument, gained nearly 10,000 acres in the process.

For climbers, the most noticeable impact will be the continuation of the \$7 per car entry fee instituted last summer. Climbing permits will continue to be required, but park staff expects they will be free for the foreseeable future.

Park Service staff began working on a climbing management plan in 1998; what effect the Black's change in status will have on that as yet unpublished document remains to be seen.



*High on the Journey Home at Colorado's Black Canyon. The Black became the nation's newest national park last October. A climbing management plan is in the works.*

## BOULDER MOUNTAIN PARKS, COLO.

Climbing access and conservation in

Boulder's Mountain Parks took a giant stride forward with the formation of the Flatirons Climbing Council (FCC) in September, an exciting and innovative partnership between the Access Fund, American Alpine Club, Colorado Mountain Club, and the Action Committee for Eldorado

Collectively these organizations represent the interests of 27,000 members. The FCC is "dedicated to conserving the climbing resources and environment of the Flatirons, preserving climbing access and the area's diverse climbing experience, and to working cooperatively to resolve climbing management issues." Through volunteer conservation and stewardship projects, direct funding, educational outreach, and the establishment of a cooperative relationship with Boulder Mountain Parks and City Open Space, the FCC hopes to establish a standard of excellence in the arena of public/private partnerships.

For information on getting involved with the FCC, please contact Access Fund Regional Coordinator Dave Turner at 303.554.8535.

## THE MONASTERY, COLO.

For several years, this area near Estes Park has had no officially designated parking area. Most climbers parked on the switchback near the trailhead. Things began to change last summer when a local landowner trucked in a modular home on the road. Due to the truck's difficulty of negotiating the switchback because of climbers' cars, the Forest Service posted "No Parking" signs on the switchback and created an official, designated parking site—a grassy meadow—100 yards down the road.

Despite the designated parking site, some homeowners remain vigilant over the new-found popularity of this area.

Recently, two climbers who had parked in the designated site returned to their cars after a day of climbing to find the message

"Tow and impound—USFS" painted on their windshields. Despite the message, we have confirmed that this was not the work of the Forest Service. However, climbers are encouraged to respect the privacy of area homeowners and to use only the designated parking area.

## RIFLE, COLO.

Relations between climbers and the city of Rifle became strained during last summer's climbing season due to parking issues. New "No Parking" signs were installed, parking enforcement was stepped up, and three individual parking spots were removed.

Rifle Mountain Park is owned and managed by the city of Rifle and supported by entry fees and by taxes on Rifle residents. Climbers are reminded that area residents have been very tolerant of climbers "taking over" their city park in the past. Please obey the parking signs, respect the other users we share the park with, and refrain from loud swearing when other visitors are present.

## SOUTH TABLE MOUNTAIN, COLO.

Colorado Springs' Table Mountain was recently closed despite a three-year effort by the Access Fund to keep the area open. Table Mountain is owned by Colorado's State Land Board, an agency established to use state-owned lands to generate income for Colorado schools. When the Fund began investigating ways to ensure access, the property was leased by a hunting group and a rancher. The Fund expressed interest in leasing the area for climbing, but the Land Board has granted an 80-year lease to a sand and gravel company to quarry aggregate at Table Mountain. Due to liability and safety concerns, the area is no longer open to public access.

## CASTLE ROCK RANCH, IDAHO

The opening of public access to this new area near the City of Rocks is subject to a complex series of land transfers that will

be enabled through authorizing legislation in the US Congress.

Idaho Senator Larry E. Craig recently introduced Bill S.1705, which will authorize the land transfers, to the US Senate on Oct. 7. The bill is now before the Senate Committee on Natural Resources.

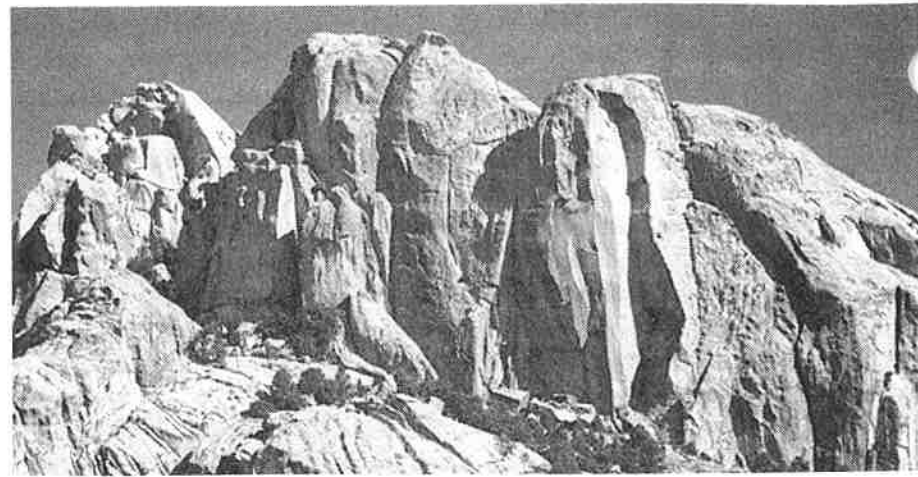
The Access Fund appreciates the input from our members on possible climbing management strategies for the Ranch (see *Vertical Times* V.30, p. 11). We are currently working with Idaho Parks and Recreation to evaluate management options.

In the next few months, Access Fund members will have another chance to help with the acquisition of the Ranch by writing letters in direct support of Sen. Craig's bill. This is the most crucial aspect of the Castle Rock Ranch acquisition for Fund members to support. Stay tuned for an update early next spring. For more information, contact Rick Thompson, acquisitions director, at 303.545.6772 ext. 105.

#### RED RIVER GORGE, KY.

The Red's Pocket Wall, which has been featured in several national climbing publications, is facing closure. Natural Bridge Kentucky State Resort Park is currently in the process of purchasing a parcel of land that contains Pocket Wall and has announced the Park intends to close the climbing area once purchased. A unique rock resource, Pocket Wall is an integral part of climbing in the Red River Gorge with its signature pockets, huge huecos, long, gently overhanging pitches, and host of moderate routes. Currently climbing is prohibited at all Kentucky State Parks, but the purchase of Pocket Wall would place a fully mature destination crag on state park property for the first time.

The Access Fund, Regional Coordinator Shannon Stuart-Smith and the Red River Gorge Climbers' Coalition are working together to open a dialog with the state park and are exploring the options for keeping Pocket Wall open. The groups have requested a meeting, tentatively scheduled for the end of November, to address the park's concern of protecting the plant and animal communities that are unique to sandstone cliffs in other parts of the park.



In the next few months, Access Fund members will have another chance to help with the acquisition of Castle Rock Ranch by writing letters in direct support of an authorizing bill.

For more information, contact Shannon Stuart-Smith at 606.269.8796.

#### QUINCY QUARRIES, MASS.

New England Regional Coordinator Richard Doucette and local activist Larry Sodano have led recent efforts to work with the Massachusetts Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), which is the agency charged with managing Quincy Quarries. After the MDC proposed to fence off and drain the quarry, climbers and local residents appealed to the state environmental officials to protect public access and protect natural resources. In a Settlement Agreement signed with local interests, the MDC agreed to develop a long-term management plan and to solicit input from area climbing organizations including Access Fund representatives.

To date, the MDC has not solicited climber input and has performed no work on the management plan. To jump-start the process, local climbers have organized a letter-writing campaign to state legislators asking that they persuade the MDC to work with local citizens, and fulfill their obligations under the Settlement Agreement.

#### TAKE ACTION

Massachusetts climbers can help with the situation at the Quincy Quarries by writing to their state representatives. In your letter, state that the MDC should develop a Management Plan for the Quincy

Quarries and should solicit input from local residents and climbers.

Names and addresses of State Legislators can be found at [www.state.ma.us/legis/citytown.htm](http://www.state.ma.us/legis/citytown.htm) or by calling 617.722.2356 (House) or 617.722.1276 (Senate). More volunteers are needed. Contact Regional Coordinator Richard Doucette at 617.924.4828 or Larry Sodano at 617.393.0280.

#### BITTERROOTS, MONT.

Regional Coordinator Steve Porcella has been leading the charge for climbers and the Access Fund in Montana's Bitterroot Range for a progressive approach to managing climbing impacts in the area. Climbing in the Bitterroots takes place on Forest Service, BLM, designated Wilderness areas, proposed wilderness areas, and private land.

"We're still in the planning or information gathering stage," Porcella says. "There's been an increase in climbing use in the Bitterroots over the last ten years. Some of the growth has been new climbers, some of it out of state climbers. But we're starting to get some impacts here like eroded trails, accumulation of trash, and poorly bolted or over bolted routes.

"There's no problem now," Porcella continues, "compared to other places in the US., but we're trying to be progressive about preventing problems in the future. The Forest Service, the main managing agency we're dealing with, doesn't have the

resources or man power to manage climbers. Therefore, we are volunteering our time and expertise to help them deal with the expanding climbing user group. One plan in the works is to set up kiosks at trailheads to present climbers three related messages:

"The first will center on a recommended, ethical, low impact behavior with regards to climbing techniques and presence in the back country. The second will focus on safety issues such as multiple parties on a single route, rockfall, climbing within ones abilities, etc. Lastly, the third message will deal with historical aspects of climbing in the Bitterroots to demonstrate that low impact ethics and responsible behavior are a landmark of the range. With this system in place we want to encourage a responsible behavior to local and out of state climbers that will lessen impact over time, preserve the quality of the resource, and present the climbing community in a favorable, progressive role. The goal is to lessen impact to resources, thereby minimizing involvement and potential future regulation by government agencies responsible for preservation of public lands."

#### JOE ENGLISH HILL, N.H.

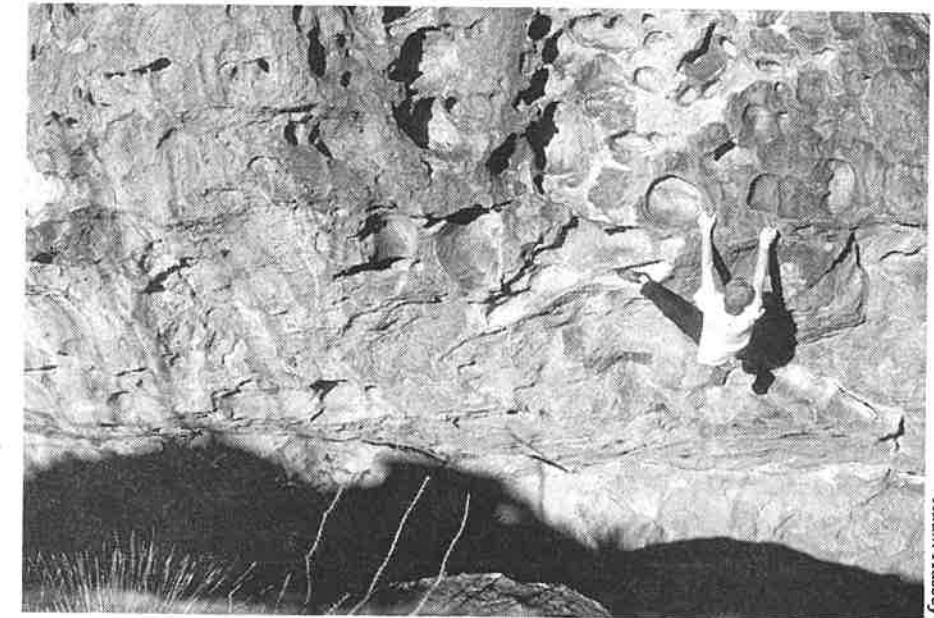
The Access Fund recently received several inquiries about climbing access at this area located on the grounds of the New Boston Air Force Station. Joe English sports about 150 routes that average two to three pitches in length.

Access has long been tenuous at the area due to the military's concerns about security and safety. Safety is problematic because the base of the cliff, which was used for bombing practice during World War II, is suspected to have remaining ordinance.

It is possible to get explicit permission to visit Joe English, but the process is not easy. Those interested should contact the Superintendent of Recreation at the air station to arrange access.

#### MCCONNELLS MILL STATE PARK, PENN.

Regional Coordinator Bob Value and Access Fund staffers Rick Thompson and Kath Pyke recently produced a 27-page



Can climbers threaten rock art if the pictographs can't be seen? Hueco Tanks officials are threatening a "sledgehammer approach" to access to protect newly found "invisible" rock art.

"Restoration, Conservation and Policy Proposal" that was submitted to park management in September. Activists Carl Samples and Ken Cline also provided extensive input for the document.

The proposal first analyzes existing site conditions, evaluates the contributing causes of the impacts, and then makes specific recommendations for mitigating impacts and revising current climbing policy. Access Fund trail guru Jim Angell will visit the site in November to make a thorough site inspection, and will subsequently develop a restoration plan for Rim Road, the Mill's most frequented climbing site. Current plans call for a major remediation project in spring, 2000.

Local climbers are encouraged to contact RC Value at 724.776.4918 for more information and to get involved in promoting climber activism at the Mill.

#### HUECO TANKS, TEXAS

In September a rock art survey company announced that more than 40 new rock art sites had been identified at Hueco Tanks State Historical Park in Texas. Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, which manages Hueco Tanks, immediately said the findings meant the agency should take a "sledgehammer approach" to public access to the park.

Using computer scanning and digital enhancement of photographs, Rupestrian CyberServices found dozens of masks and other pictographs that were "practically invisible" to the naked eye.

The project is part of a comprehensive effort to catalog and map Hueco's diverse archeological sites. Hueco Tanks has North America's largest concentration of painted mask rock art, and is considered a highly significant archeological site.

While the researchers noted that "three-quarters of the ancient rock art sites have [already] been negatively impacted... by direct vandalism, indirect human impacts such as lighting nearby campfires, or natural processes such as weather and wasp nests built over the paint," there is no mention of the effect, if any, of climbing on Hueco's rock art.

The Access Fund has always supported TPWD's commitment to protect the rock art at Hueco Tanks (see related story, page 9). What we do not support is the agency's decision to restrict climbing access severely when there is little or no evidence that climbing has damaged rock art in the park, or could not be managed easily with fewer restrictions.

The Access Fund's goal is to get TPWD to agree that Hueco Tanks has unique value as a world-class climbing resource, and to

obtain adjustments to the park's climbing access policy which support this recognition while providing full protection for rock art. To this end the Access Fund continues to review TPWD internal documents and do other legal research, and is working with local climbing organizations on additional strategies.

For more information, contact Access Fund Action Committee Chair Eric Hobday at 972.247.1592.

### CASTLE VALLEY, UTAH

Utah Regional Coordinator Allen Sanderson and activist David Early recently alerted the Fund that property at the base of Castleton Tower owned by Utah School Trust Lands will soon be coming up for sale in Castle Valley near Moab. This land includes historic and popular access and camping sites for climbs on Castleton and the Rectory/Priest.

Utah School Trust lands are managed and at times are subject to disposal to benefit Utah schools. If not protected, some of the properties coming up for disposal could be sold for development. The Access Fund has begun working with local climbers and the newly formed Castle Valley Collaboration, a local land preservation group, to assess the feasibility of purchasing this land for long-term preservation. For more information or to help with preserving the area, call Acquisitions Director Rick Thompson at 888.863.6237, ext. 105.

### SOUTHEASTERN UTAH

The Access Fund looks forward to working with a new local climbers organization in southeast Utah's canyon country. Called the Canyonlands Climbers Coalition (CCC), the group aims to coordinate service projects to benefit climbers and the environment; to promote access to public lands; and to foster relationships between climbers and land stewards. Though access issues have abounded in the red rock desert for a number of years (the ban on new fixed anchors in Canyonlands NP, camping and trail issues at Indian Creek), the coalition is the first local group to take on these problems.

CCC is just getting started and actively



Ace Kvalie

### A new climbers' organization in southeast Utah will protect areas like Indian Creek

looking for new members. The group is headquartered in Moab and led by Eve Tallman; contact them at 435.259.5639 or e-mail [evetree@lasal.net](mailto:evetree@lasal.net).

### GREEN GIANT BUTTRESS, WASHINGTON

The Darrington Ranger District of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest has proposed closing the road to one of Washington's premier multi-pitch walls, the Green Giant Buttress near Darrington. The District's plan is to gate Forest Road 2065 (Copper Creek Road) just past the Squire Creek Trailhead (the jumping-off point for Three O-Clock Rock and The Comb) to avoid maintenance costs.

The District's proposal, if implemented, will add approximately four miles to the already time-consuming hike to and from the Buttress. This will make one-day ascents of the ultra-classic Dreamer route (IV, 5.9 or 5.10b), as well as Safe Sex (IV, 5.9) and The Fast Lane (IV, 5.11c), much more difficult for most parties.

### TAKE ACTION

The District's decision isn't final. You can help by writing or calling the District and asking them to please keep the road open. Explain to them:

- Forest Road 2065 is used by climbers to reach the Green Giant Buttress, an important climbing destination; and
- Closing the road will make one-day ascents of the Buttress difficult and encourage parties to camp close to the wall, thus creating new impacts in a designated wilderness area.

Please write as soon as possible—time is critical with this issue. You can contact the District at:

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest  
Darrington Ranger District  
1405 Emmons Street  
Darrington, WA 98241  
360.436.1155

### FRENCHMAN COULEE/LOWER TIETON RIVER, WASHINGTON

Beginning this year, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has implemented an "Access Stewardship Decal" requirement to help make up a 66-percent maintenance budget shortfall caused by declining sales of fishing and hunting licenses. This means that climbers must now buy an \$11 window decal (good for one year) in order to legally park at WDFW-managed areas such as Frenchman Coulee (Vantage) and the lower Tieton River cliffs (Royal Columns, The Bend, and Moon Rocks).

As a number of climbers have already discovered, the price for parking without a decal is a \$66 ticket. Access Stewardship decals are available wherever fishing and hunting licenses are sold. A list of vendors is posted at [www.wa.gov/wdfw/lic/vendors.htm](http://www.wa.gov/wdfw/lic/vendors.htm).

The Access Fund has taken an official position against the user fee demonstration program administered by the federal agencies. Traditionally, the WDFW has relied upon the fees generated from fishing and hunting licenses—and not tax money from the state general fund—to manage its lands. With hunting and fishing on the decline, and "new" recreation such as climbing and kayaking on the rise, the agency is incorporating new user groups into its traditional funding framework.

The Access Fund has worked hard to preserve climbing at Frenchman Coulee by representing that climbers are willing to mitigate their impacts. This position will be difficult to maintain if climbers refuse to comply with the decal requirement. At the same time, if the agency is collecting money directly from climbers, we are in a much stronger position to ask for needed improvements such as permanent toilets. Therefore, at this time we encourage climbers to comply with the Access Stewardship Decal program.

## GOVERNMENT POLICY PERTAINING TO CLIMBERS

PolicyUP  
date

### NEW INITIATIVE TO BOOST RECREATION AND CONSERVATION FUNDING

The Access Fund has joined forces with a handful of similar advocacy groups, including the Outdoor Recreation Coalition of America, the American Hiking Society, and American Whitewater, to push for significant increases in Congressional funding for recreation and conservation programs in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 federal budget.

This year, thanks to President Clinton's Lands Legacy Initiative and support from Congress, it appears that the Land and Water Conservation Fund will receive permanent funding. Monies from this fund can be used for land acquisition and protection. This is a good start. But Congress has been trying to fund land management through use fees and other dubious alternatives to annual appropriations. The recreation community needs to let Congress know that, with respect to public lands

**The current investment does not match the role recreation plays.**

administration, we want our tax dollars spent on recreation and conservation rather than resource extraction, and we do not want new and higher use fees to become an excuse for cutting agency budgets even further.

Here's an example of how appropriations do not match agency needs: the US Forest Service estimates recreation will create about 75 percent of the Gross Domestic Product generated from national forest lands in the year 2000, yet recreation accounts for only eight percent of the Forest Service's proposed budget for FY 2000. The current investment does not match the role recreation plays, nor does it meet the needs of the growing number of recreational visitors to national forests. This is true for the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management as well.

At this time the budget process for FY 2001 is just beginning. The Access Fund is working on a joint proposal for government budget planners that would provide a major boost in funding for recreation and resource protection. Climbers can help by writing or calling their representatives and senators and urging a substantial increase in appropriations for these programs. For more information, contact Senior Policy Analyst Sam Davidson at 831.770.1523 or [sam@accessfund.org](mailto:sam@accessfund.org).

### SIERRA CLUB PROPOSES REVISION TO FIXED ANCHOR POSITION STATEMENT

In September the Sierra Club released a draft of a new position statement on climbing and fixed anchor use in wilderness



areas. Sierra Club members are invited to comment on the position statement until December 1, 1999.

The revised position statement retains its recommendation that fixed anchors be allowed and managed in wilderness. The Access Fund commends the Sierra Club for its thorough analysis of this issue, and will encourage the Club to make sure that language in its position statement does not inadvertently create new problems in legal interpretation and wilderness management. We will continue to work closely with the Sierra Club and other leading environmental groups on wilderness preservation and management.

To review the proposed new position statement, visit the Access Fund Web site at [www.accessfund.org](http://www.accessfund.org). Comments can be sent by mail or e-mail to: Ken Cline, 31 Ledgelawn Ave., Bar Harbor, ME 04609 or [ken.cline@sierraclub.org](mailto:ken.cline@sierraclub.org).

### YOSEMITE: CAMP 4 WILL BE OFFICIAL NAME FOR HISTORIC CAMPGROUND

In September the National Park Service

announced it would not propose any new development next to the historic climbers campground in Yosemite Valley, and would officially redesignate the campground "Camp 4," the name by which it has always been known to the climbing community.

The Park Service has yet to nominate Camp 4 for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, an important step which assures permanent protection for the campground. But Yosemite officials said that this procedural step would be taken soon.

Somewhat lost in the fight to save Camp 4 is the fact that the Park Service has proposed major, controversial changes for Yosemite Valley. Among these are elimination of personal automobiles from the upper Valley, construction of a huge parking area across the Valley from El Capitan, elimination of many campsites, mandatory reservations for entrance to the park, even for day-use visitors, and new use fees for activities such as climbing. The Access Fund continues to work with the NPS as it develops the omnibus Yosemite Valley Plan, to ensure that changes in Yosemite's management and facilities accommodate climbers' unique use patterns.

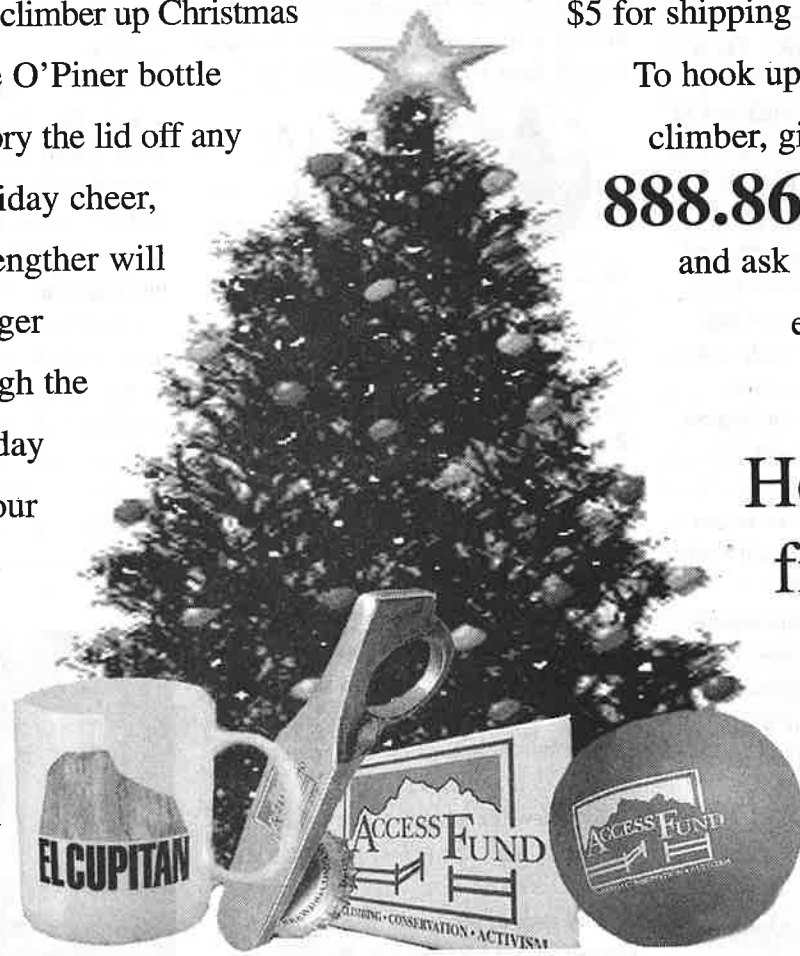


Tom Frost

Camp 4: the once and future name for Yosemite's walk-in campground

# Still Wondering what? to get the climber on your list ●

Set him or her up with our Climber's Christmas Survival Set at a great discount price. The El Cupitan mug will get your climber up Christmas morning, the O'Piner bottle opener will pry the lid off any bottle of holiday cheer, the hand strengthener will maintain finger power through the longest holiday layoff, and our refrigerator magnet will keep those X-mas bills neatly stuck to your fridge.



The Climber's Christmas Survival Set is a \$32 value that we're blowing out the door for \$25 plus \$5 for shipping and handling. To hook up your favorite climber, give us a call at **888.863.6327** and ask for Heather at extension 100.

Happy  
Holidays  
from all  
of us  
at the  
Access  
Fund!

## THE HUECO FILES

The truth is more out there than we thought

by Sam Davidson, Senior Policy Agent

On the summer solstice of this year I got an alpine start—not for any climb, but for a flight to El Paso, Texas. I was to meet Access Fund President Michael Kennedy and legal ace Larry Gustafson for two days of poring over documents buried in the files of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Not anyone's idea of fun, but we are way beyond fun at Hueco Tanks.

The Access Fund has been working since its formation in 1990 to improve relations between climbers and TPWD, as well as to help Hueco Tanks address resource impact issues. Despite our efforts, and those of Texas climbing organizations, to work out a mutually satisfactory policy for climbing with TPWD, the agency last year imposed such severe restrictions on access that, unless you are a local, it is extremely difficult to visit the park as a climber. Even locals can't boulder outside of North Mountain with any regularity—you must be accompanied by an escort, and have a maximum of two hours, for any type of visit to the rest of the park.

But what is worse is that TPWD has refused to acknowledge Hueco's importance as a climbing area. Recognition of a unique value is the first step towards preserving it. Not only is the park a world-class climbing resource, with seemingly infinite routes and problems of exceptional quality—it is the only climbing area of its type, anywhere. And in the name of rock art protection, TPWD has more-or-less said that climbers aren't welcome there.

But back to the Hueco files. Michael, Larry and I met in El Paso, with no prospects for climbing, to find out what TPWD officials did and said, in public and in private, during the process of developing the Public Use and Resource Management Plans for Hueco over the past several years. We wanted to know if TPWD did everything above board, and completed the planning process fairly and according to law. We wanted to know what the agency thinks about climbers, and whether this thinking improperly affected its decision-making.

What we found is startling.

It is very clear from the administrative record that (1) TPWD has maintained a long-term prejudice against climbers, and (2) there is no hard evidence of any kind that climbing necessarily causes harm to the rock art at Hueco, or anywhere else. What's

more, TPWD knew five years ago that it wanted to eliminate, or at least largely curtail, climbing at Hueco Tanks. The planning process appears to have been a sham, in terms of the agency's receptiveness to public feedback about alternatives for managing Hueco for a variety of values.

Our visit was somewhat surreal, and not just because of El Paso's border-town edginess. Not surprisingly, TPWD officials were suspicious of us. Park manager Ray Sierra told us repeatedly that everything we would want to see was to be found in the files in his office at the park, and that there was no point in going to the TPWD's central office in El Paso. The next day, when we went to TPWD's regional office in Ft. Davis, four hours' drive to the east, we found this was not the case: numerous interesting documents written by Sierra or copied to him, which we had not seen in his office, were there.

After reviewing files at Hueco, we went to the office in downtown El Paso—located between a liquor store and a topless bar, a strange subterranean complex where a self-described "mushroom man," a mid-level bureaucrat kept "in the dark" about our visit, tried in an almost comical fashion to explain why his boss had skipped out just before we arrived, and had not set aside any files for us to review, as pre-arranged.

We have yet to review the files in this office, and additional files remain to be looked at in TPWD headquarters in Austin. We hope to complete this effort by the end of 1999.

Why go to all this bother, some of you might be thinking. Isn't there something more direct and potentially productive we could do, like sue TPWD? That's exactly what we're trying to determine.

In the meantime we're doing other, more positive things: sup-



Leading out on the second pitch of Urial's Heap on the Front Side as locals look on.

Texas Mountaineers

## What does climbing mean to you?



Isn't it worth preserving?  
Our climbing future is under attack.  
Help us fight back by investing in the future of climbing.  
Give an end-of-year gift to the Access Fund.

There are many ways you can help preserve our valued climbing resources. The Access Fund's planned giving staff can help you determine which one is appropriate for you. They include:

◦ **Stock**

Stock is an attractive option for many people because you not only get to deduct the appreciated value of the stock, but you are not required to pay capital gains tax on the asset. In cases where the initial investment was small, the resulting contribution and subsequent deduction can be substantial.

◦ **Bequest**

By putting the Access Fund in your will, you may lower your estate taxes while helping to ensure climbing will be preserved for future generations. We can provide sample language to make this easy for you.

◦ **Charitable Gift Annuity**

You make a gift to the Access Fund in return for a fixed amount of annual income and a tax deduction. You may receive income immediately or defer it until retirement.

◦ **Pooled Income Fund**

You make a gift of \$5,000 or more to the pooled income fund, which is similar to a mutual fund. You receive a variable amount of income each year, and the assets ultimately go to the Access Fund.

If your gift is \$10,000 or more, you may designate it for one of the following categories: Acquisitions, Advocacy & Activism, Membership, Trails, Education, Climbing Preservation Projects or Unrestricted. For more information on any of these options, contact Susy Levin in the Access Fund office at 303-545-6772, ext. 102.

### THE HUECO FILES (from page 9)

porting the formation of a new state-wide climbers coalition; working to build political support for climbing at Hueco; and actively seeking alternative ways to work with TPWD to ensure that Hueco's exceptional rock art is fully protected while restrictions on climbing could be eased.

Michael, Larry and I took a brief walk through a portion of Hueco Tanks after our visit to the park manager's office, marveling at the uniqueness of the stone, so finely featured, calling like a siren to be

climbed. Surely few other places provide such exquisite opportunities to find that pure, primitive joy that comes from bouldering. We also checked out a couple of the more accessible rock art sites, and agreed that, to climbers, the presence of this art, and the old peoples and events it evokes, make the place all the more appealing. Our conviction that climbing is not antithetical to protection of the rock art—that climbers will support reasonable restrictions and even work closely with TPWD to identify

and preserve the integrity of sensitive resources—solidified still more.

There must be a better way for Hueco. And the Access Fund will do whatever it takes to find this way and make it happen.



Rob Linnebach

### Fall 1999 Climbers Rendezvous

The Access Fund's fall board meeting at the New River Gorge in West Virginia was complemented by some fine weather and several fun social occasions, giving directors, regional coordinators and staff ample opportunity to mingle with guests and the New's spectacular Nuttall Sandstone. Undoubtedly, the event would not have operated smoothly without the immense effort and graciousness put forth by our local hosts, Gene and Maura Kistler.

#### Awards given at the fall Rendezvous

• **Bebie Award** given for the single most outstanding contribution to access, conservation and grassroots activism:

**Leslie Brown**

• **Sharp End Awards** given for notable support of our mission to keep climbing areas open and to conserve the climbing environment:

**Pat Jodice, Becky Hall, Chris Watford, Shannon Stuart-Smith**

• **Regional Coordinator of the Year** given to the most outstanding commitment shown by a regional coordinator: **Gene Kistler**

• **Partnership Awards** given for outstanding local stewardship: **Southeast Climbers Coalition, Friends of Seneca, Coopers Rock Foundation**

• **Departing Board Member Award** given for distinguished volunteer service upon departing the Board of Directors: **Barry Gilbert**

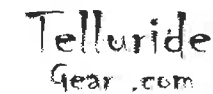
• **Land Manager of the Year: Tom Skinner, Cochise Stronghold, Ariz.**



Bebie award winner  
Leslie Brown

had on the world wide web from some of our corporate partners.

If you do, you'll benefit the Access Fund as well. Several Access Fund Corporate Partners are donating a percentage of the purchase price of all goods ordered from their on-line retail sites directly to the Fund. Before you rush to your computer, though, be sure to use the preset connections found on the Access Fund's Web site at [www.accessfund.org/gear.html](http://www.accessfund.org/gear.html). Look for and use the following logos and hyperlinks in order to direct a portion of your purchase price to the Access Fund.



Another interesting choice on the Web allows you to designate a percentage of your purchases to the Access Fund, too. Visit [www.igive.com](http://www.igive.com), an on-line shopping mall with select savings on office supplies, books, CDs, videos, toys, flowers, sporting goods, gifts, groceries, gardening supplies and more. Before you can begin shopping though, you must register as a member (for free) and indicate that you want to designate the Access Fund as your non-profit of choice. Follow the directions that are clearly stated on [igive.com](http://igive.com)'s website.

Don't have a computer? You can still go shopping the traditional way and support the Access Fund's Corporate and Retail Partners. If you have questions about our on-line partnerships or need to find one of our retail partners, please call Aarik at 303.545.6772 ext. 107.

### Regional Coordinator update

The Access Fund's Regional Coordinators (RCs) are the cornerstone of our support for grassroots climber activism and are one of our most valuable resources for keeping climbing areas open. As trained experts in access issues, RCs are the Fund's principal liaisons to local areas and represent climbers' interests on both private and public lands.

The Fund would like to extend a welcome and thanks to these new RCs for volunteering their time to fight for climbing access in their areas: Richard Doucette, New England region; Terry Kerby, Hawaii; Kerry Nodal, Northern Arizona.

The Fund is also looking for volunteer RCs to coordinate local access efforts in the following areas: Iowa; Great Basin; Nevada and Alaska.

If you're interested, or know someone who would be good at the job, contact the Fund at 888.863.6237.

### Department of Corrections

Mike Lewis of the AAC writes us that he is not, in fact, a charter member of the AAC (as reported in *Spray*; vol. 30), which was founded in 1902, which would make him 97 years old. On the contrary, Lewis reports his age as a youthful 39.

Wisconsin Regional Coordinator Steve Frye alerts us to two corrections in our recently published *Member Handbook*: first, his last name is indeed spelled with an E at the end; and second, his correct e-mail address is [ryerok@idcnet.com](mailto:ryerok@idcnet.com).

### Point and click Christmas shopping benefits the Access Fund

Unsure on what to get your climbing partner this holiday season? Running out of time to get those last-minute gifts? Along with our Climber's Christmas Survival Set of Access Fund merchandise on page 8, you might want to check out the deals to be

By Kath Pyke,  
conservation director

## PEREGRINE FALCON DELISTED

On August 25, the Department of the Interior announced that the Peregrine Falcon has been removed from the Threatened and Endangered species list. The Access Fund has been closely following the delisting proposal since it was announced 12 months earlier (see *Vertical Times*, vol. 23, July 1998, available on our web site). Our submissions have focused on how a change in status might affect existing raptor climbing restrictions currently in place at over 90 US climbing locations.

Despite delisting, Peregrine Falcons remain protected under the Migratory Bird Act, individual state laws and local authority bylaws. As with Golden Eagles and Prairie Falcons, the Access Fund continues to support arrangements that provide the necessary protection for these cliff-nesting birds. However, there may be some situations where it is timely to review changes in nesting location and extent of closure boundaries. The Access Fund provides advice and a framework for discussions in our special handbook *Raptors and Climbers—guidance for managing climbing to protect raptor nest sites*. This is available free to those in land management or education. If you have any questions about the situation in your area, call or e-mail Kath Pyke at the Access Fund.

## FROM SCIENCE TO TIME—ACADEMIC DEBATE SPREADS INTO CLIMBING AND POPULAR PRESS

The academic debate first started in *Science* by an article on cliff climbing impacts (see *Vertical Times*, vol. 28, May

99, available on our web site) and shows no signs of dying down. First, the Access Fund had a response letter published in the next issue of *Science* (Vol. 284). Next came articles in *Nature* (April 99), *BioScience* (July 99) and *American Scientist* (Sept-Oct 99). Publications as small as local newspapers like western North Carolina's *Watauga Democrat* (Friday, Oct. 22) have gotten into the act.

Fortunately, these articles have presented a more sophisticated analysis. *Climbing* magazine (Oct. 99) picked up on the debate with Wills Young's Access column, and this is followed up by a letter from the Access Fund in the December 15 issue. The popularization of climbing even reached new heights with a front cover shot on *Time* magazine (Sept 99). The ultimate result of all this publicity has been to raise the profile and debate on a science-based approach to climbing management. Access Fund staffers Sam Davidson and Kath Pyke will be speaking on this subject at the 1999 Congress on Resource and Recreation Carrying Capacities on Dec. 2 at Snowmass, CO.

## PARK SERVICE SAYS YOSEMITE'S BEAR PROBLEM DECREASING

The National Park Service released sharply lower figures for vehicle break-ins by black bears at Yosemite for the recent summer season.

In 1998, bears broke into 1,541 vehicles causing \$657,110 in damage. As of mid-September this year, break-ins were down to 506 and damage had decreased to



US Forest Service

Efforts by the Park Service have sharply reduced vehicle break-ins by black bears at Yosemite Valley.

\$177,000. If the current trend continues, break-ins for 1999 will be one third those in 1998.

Park Service actions have played a major part in reducing bear conflicts in the park. Rangers took a one-time congressional appropriation of \$500,000 and hired staff to keep the valley cleaner and freer of trash. In the evenings, a group of volunteers actively follow bears to discourage them from breaking into cars. Park security runs them off from hotel and campground parking lots. Yosemite has also implemented a new registration system that allows rangers and security staff to identify cars that appear likely targets for break-ins, then find the guests that own the cars and warn them of the potential for problems.

In addition, rangers have continued to trap problem bears and relocate them to other parts of the park. This strategy is only unsuccessful, however, as the bears have a very strong ability to navigate their way back to their former stomping grounds. In the worst cases, when bears have lost their fear of humans and become threats to safety, they are killed by rangers. Three bears were killed in 1998, and two have been killed so far this year.



# Hot Projects and events

## OVER THE RIM CLEANUP

About 80 folks from The Arizona Mountaineering Club (AMC), Central Arizona Mountain Rescue Association and Southern Arizona Rescue Association rendezvoused on Sept. 25 at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon to rappel over the rim and clean up trash. This event was the 11th annual clean-up and was held in cooperation with AMC and the National Park Service.

## CLIMB SMART 3

by Teresa Hukari

So now we've done it three times, and each time Climb Smart 3 has improved. Once again this year we headed for Joshua Tree with rigs packed to the gills with participant packets, water jugs, raffle prizes, *Climbing* magazines, camping gear, banners, etc.

Climb Smart began as an instructional event where people could rotate through different climbing clinics and fun activities like raffles, meals and slide shows. This year's line up included Jeff Cooper, Michael Plencner, John Jacobs, Steven Carre, Kevin Thaw, Linh Nguyen, Dean Potter and John Watson.

In the end we treated over 100 enthusiastic clients to 18 clinics and raised \$5,118 for the Access Fund! Each person who attends Climb Smart automatically becomes a member of the Access Fund through his or her clinic fee. Special thanks to Adventure 16, Black Diamond and Patagonia for making this event happen!

## FAT CRACK FESTIVAL

by Wade Griffith

On Sept. 25, despite 40 mph winds, the second-annual Fat Crack Fest was a great success. The day started with a trash clean-up that filled a trailer with old tires, corrugated metal and hub caps. Afternoon activities included a shoe demo by Scarpa,

a crack climbing comp, barbecue and Access Fund raffle. The crack climbing comp consisted of climbing a 5.9 hand-crack/offwidth while wearing mud-caked swim goggles and being squirted by three Supersoakers! The raffle brought in \$852 and 35 Access Fund members. No reports on the post-comp physical and psychological condition of the fat-crack competitors were available at press time.

## FIXED ANCHOR SURVEY AND REPLACEMENT CONTINUES AT DEVILS TOWER NATIONAL MONUMENT

by Dennis Horning and Hollis Marriott

An inventory of fixed anchors was initiated at Devils Tower National Monument in 1998, under the guidance of Chief Ranger Jim Schlinkmann of the National Park Service. The work has been done by Dennis Horning, long-time area climber and author of the *Poorperson's Guidebook to Devils Tower*. Horning has been assisted by various friends, including Hollis Marriott, Dan Rosen, Ryan Laird, Mark DeVries, Go Iwahana and Dave Larsen. The project is funded by the Devils Tower Natural History Association.

The two basic objectives of the survey are to determine the number of bolts and other hardware on the Tower, and to find and replace dangerous anchors. In keeping with Monument policy, there has been no net increase in the number of anchors.

During the 1998 and 1999 climbing seasons, Devils Tower was surveyed from the ground by using a spotting scope, and by climbing routes in areas with significant numbers of anchors not visible from the ground. Suspect bolts were removed and replaced where appropriate. Bad anchors reported by park staff or other climbers were also replaced. Bolts at least 3/8 inch in diameter were used for replacement, along with camouflaged hangers or welded

cold-shuts. Where appropriate, webbing was replaced with camouflaged



Braving offwidths and Super Soakers at Vedauwoo's Fat Crack Festival.

chains or welded cold-shuts. A total of 65 old bolts were removed, and 59 new replacement anchors were installed.

Survey and replacement of bolts at Devils Tower should continue in the future. Old 1/4-inch bolts were often removed or broken off with little effort, confirming the suspicion that they are quite dangerous.

## PEBBLE BEACH TRAIL PROJECT, RED RIVER GORGE

Over the weekend of Oct. 23-24, close to 50 volunteers showed up in crisp fall weather at the Red River Gorge to complete a new trail to the Pebble Beach crag. The new 1,700-foot trail represents the successful completion of the second-annual trail building project jointly sponsored by the Red River Gorge Climbers' Coalition, the Access Fund, and the US Forest Service. Jim Angell, whose presence was funded by a grant from the Access Fund, once again provided invaluable trail building expertise, experience, and all the necessary tools.

## Nationwide

Win a free trip to Nepal—log on to the Adventure Consultants Web site at [www.adcn.com](http://www.adcn.com) and make a donation to the Access Fund

## November

20 Las Vegas, NV—Steve Schneider Slide Show, Desert Rock Sports, Las Vegas, Mike & Tim Ward 702.254.1143

20 Bloomington, IL—6th Annual Hangdog Jamboree, Upper Limits, Jennifer Hawbaker/Jill Riggert 800.964.7814

20 Cleveland, OH—Climbing comp,

Cleveland Rock Gym, Wendy Atkinson 216.692.3300

20 Seattle, WA—Seattle Bouldering Challenge, Stone Gardens, Deane Studer 206.781.9828

20 Flagstaff, AZ—Cranksgiving Climbing Competition, Vertical Relief Rock Gym, Holly 520.556.9909

20 Las Vegas, NV—Red Rocks Climbers Project Day, sponsored by the Las Vegas Climbers Liaison Council and the BLM, Mark Limage 702.233.4356

25 El Portero Chico, Mexico—El Portero Trail Projects & Clean-Ups, Kurt Smith & Mike Lewis 512.422.1370

27 New Paltz, NY—Big Up Productions Chris Sharma video release party, Rock & Snow, 212.774.7418

## December

4 Allendale, MI—Youth & Adult Indoor Climbing Compassion, Grand Valley State University, Michelle Hendrickson 616.895.6611

4 Newark, DE—Climbing comp, Univ. of Delaware Climbing Club, Fred Bohm 302.831.2606

4 Asheville, NC—5th Annual Fall FlashFest, CLIMBMAX, INC., Andrew Kucera 828.252.9996

10 Seattle, WA—Carlos Buhler slide show sponsored by Outdoor Research, REI 206.223.1944

11—Enchanted Rock, Texas—Enchanted Rock Trail Project, Central Texas Climbers Coalition, Michael Lewis 210.695.3046

12 New Brunswick, NJ—Holiday Hang, Rutgers Univ. Rock Gym, 908.932.5811

29 Cincinnati, OH—Eastern Bouldering Series Regional comp, Climb Time of Cincinnati 513.891.4850

## January

1 Berkeley, CA—Fifth Annual Youth Climbing League Aspiring Heights Allison Levy- 510-558-0106

11 Jackson, WY—Abby Watkins first ascent of Changi Tower Skinny Skis (307) 733-6094

# Events

14 Ouray, CO—Ouray Ice Festival, Teri Ebel & Jeff Lowe 303.258.7916

15 Keene Valley, NY—4th Annual Adirondack Mountaineering Festival, The Mountaineer, Vinny McClelland 518.576.2281

21 Golden, CO—Outward Bound slide shows, American Mountaineering Center, photo display, Trish Gumina 303.831.6967

29 Salt Lake City, UT Boulder Blast VI Rockcreation, Nathan Smith 801.278.7473

### CLIMBING PRESERVATION GRANT



#### PROSPECT HEIGHTS MIDDLE SCHOOL

At the fall Climbers Rendezvous at the New River Gorge, the Access Fund's Board of Directors approved a Climbing Preservation Grant for the Discovery Program at Prospect Heights Middle School in Orange, Va.

The grant of \$1,150 will enable Prospect Heights to continue its Discovery Program, an Outward

Bound-based experiential education program dedicated to educating the next generation of outdoor enthusi-

asts. Prospect Heights Middle School is currently the only public school in the country to offer this type of program to students. In the Discovery

Program, North Carolina Outward Bound instructors teach students beginning climbing skills, wilderness

safety and environmental ethics.

## TO ALL WHO'VE HELPED US ACHIEVE OUR MISSION

# Thank you

The following people extended their time and effort to help the Access Fund's mission of outreach, education and fundraising. We appreciate and thank each of you!

### CLIMBING AND BOULDERING COMPETITIONS

Peter Joyce, Goose Kearse, Jim Horton, Rockcreation, Rick Agnelli, CA Polytechnic Outings-Poly Escapes, Lang McHardy, Daren Conner, Hans Florine, CityRock Gym, Urban Krag Climbing Center, Karl Williamson, Ken Cline

### HOSTING OR GIVING A SLIDE SHOW

Jamie Tipton, Mountain Hardware, Allison Levy, Aspiring Heights, Chris McNamara, Paul Diefenderfer, Stephen Koch, Shawn Chartrand, Rock and Snow, Inc, Dick Williams, Erewhon Mountain Outfitter, Thomas Rock, John Sherman, Hans Florine, Arizona Mountaineering Club, Lynn Hill, Jared Ogden, Patagonia-Washington D.C, Armando Menocal, Dusty Wissmath, Mountain Dreams International

### FESTIVALS, DEMOS AND MEMBERSHIP PROMOS

Adventure 16, Melissa Dennison, Teresa Hukari, Kevin Thaw, Dean Potter, Linh Nguyen, Andy Howe, John Watson, She Climbs, Debbie Brooks, Nan Burmeister, Beartooth Climbing Club, Jim Rott, Basecamp, Myke Bybee, Kevin Kobe, Outdoor Recreation-Logan, UT, Mark and Debra Melvin

### TRAIL PROJECTS AND CLEAN-UPS

Wade Griffith, Cross Country Connection, Ken Gasch, Bob at Sunlight Sports, Fremont Canyon Clean-up, The Peak Climbing Gym, Deb Starks, Ron Felton, Gary Youngblood, Arizona Mountaineers, Mike Lewis, Texas Mountaineers

### NEW OR RENEWING COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Colorado Outward Bound-\$25, Sky's The Limit-\$50, Long Rock Adventures-\$50, Prairie Walls, Inc-\$100, Shasta Mountain Guides-\$100, X-TREME Rock Climbing Center-\$100, Explorer's Club of Pittsburgh-\$100, Telluride Mountain Club-\$200, Mountain Dreams International, Inc-\$100, The Rock Barn-\$50, Sanctuary Rock Gym-\$100, Urban Krag Climbing Center-\$35, CA Polytechnic Outings-Poly Escapes-\$200, The Peak Climbing Gym-\$50, Rocknasium-\$25, Vertical Relief Rock Gym-\$50, Southwest Climbing Resource-\$50

### VOLUNTEERS

Charlie Anderson, Russ Dubiel, Matt Fetbrod, Tony Herr, Clint Locks, Evie Nott, Bia Yordi, Fran Allison, Chad Hilliard, David Rivers

### FOR JUST BEING AWESOME!

Stoneworks Climbing Gym, Mike and Karen Henery (we'll miss you!), Neptune Mountaineering, Michael and Julie Kennedy, Charlotte Fox, Charles Lenhoff, Reese Martin, Scott Williams, Erewhon Mountain Outfitter-Schaumburg, Andy Fitz, Any Mountain and Kimberlyn Coker (for trying!), Black Diamond, Jeb Tilly, Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine, High Country Climber, Chris Beh, Chris Archer

## 1999 CORPORATE PARTNERS

The Access Fund sends great thanks to industry members and like-minded businesses who are partnering with us this year. Please support them.

#### DIAMOND PARTNERS \$20,000+

• Black Diamond Equipment  
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•Royal Robbins

•Weathered Stone

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•Moonstone

•Mountain Madness

•Mountain Tools

•MountainWoman.com

•Nicros

•Planet Outdoors.com

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•Seattle Manufacturing

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# Inside



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*Vertical Times* is the membership newsletter of the Access Fund and is published six times a year in January, March, May, July, September and November.

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## OUR GOAL: 100,000 ACTIONS IN 2000

*From the desk of the Executive Director*



Dear Friends:

Late July in Rocky Mountain National Park I had the worst epic of my climbing career. "Highlights" included rappelling 800 feet in lightning, thunder and pouring rain; getting the ropes stuck; leaving lots of gear; hypothermia setting in—all the standard epic elements. The outcome was definitely uncertain which, someone told me, is the definition of a true adventure. I've never been so grateful to be back on the ground.

The freedom to seek an adventure is a fundamental reason why we climb. It's also a basic principle guiding the Access Fund's advocacy efforts. We are committed to preserving opportunities for adventure, especially those that challenge us to the fullest.

Since the Forest Service began its efforts to ban all use of fixed anchors in Wilderness more than 10 years ago, our most important fight has been to establish the legitimacy of climbing and the most basic tools we require on our public lands. We'll represent your interests in the upcoming Negotiated Rulemaking, which will develop a policy on fixed anchors for the Forest Service. The result will affect how other federal agencies manage climbing.

It's crucial that you get involved in preserving climbing opportunities for the future. Everyone can help, whether it's a donation of time or money, writing a letter, meeting your local land manager, or simply renewing your membership to the Access Fund. In 2000 the Access Fund will be unveiling a public awareness campaign directed at inspiring the entire climbing community to take actions such as those listed above. If we succeed, American climbers will take 100,000 actions on behalf of the vertical world we cherish. We hope to radically raise the level of activism and foster a new ethic of climbing stewardship, one in which we take care of our crags, design our own fates, and define our own adventures.

Don't forget your prussiks!

Sally Moser, Executive Director